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A PAZ É POSSÍVEL EM TIMOR-LESTE
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NOTE ON THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF UNITED NATIONS ON DECOLONISATION

1. The General Assembly of the United Nations meets once a year, in ordinary session, at the begining of September, usually proceeding till December. Because of the large number of questions that have to be considered by the General Assembly in its agenda (around 150, actually), the 7 Principal Committees are called to study , analyse and prepare recommandations to later approval at the G. Assembly. The Fourth Committee is directed to the decolonisation problem.

2. At the 15th. General Assembly ordinary session (1960) was approved the Resolution 1514, known as the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. This Resolution condemns every and any form of subjection, discrimination and exploitation, stressing the right of all peoples to establish, freely, their political regime and their economic, social and cultural development.

3. Following the approval of this historical Resolution, the United Nations created (1960) the Special Committee on Decolonisation (also known as the Committee of the 24) whose purpose is to contribute to enlighten the situation of still non-autonomous peoples, preparing the discussion at the General Assembly in order to find the most just solutions, according to the International Law and the United Nations Charter, for every issue in discussion.

4. East Timor is included, since many years, on the list of non-autonomous territories and, in consequence, on the agenda of the Committee, who meets annualy, always in August, in the head-quarters of the United Nations (New York).

5. At each session of the Committee may intervene States members of the U. Nations and individuals of recognized prestige (experts, researchers, profiled persons of the political, religious or cultural life, representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations, and so on...), these as 'petitioners'.

6. The statement, written, must be short (3 pages), and a more complete account (7-8 pages) can be distributed if considered useful. The common official languages are French, English and Spanish. As soon as possible (till mid-July) a letter must be sent to the Secretariat of the Committee expressing,more or less, the following: "I should like to be granted a hearing when the Special Committee on Decolonisation discuss the question of East Timor", and giving your name. The letter must be sent to:

   The Chairman
   Special Committee on Decolonisation (attention Mr. Tom Tanaka)
   33rd Floor
   United Nations Secretariat Building
   New York NY 10017 - UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

7. In 1986 the session on East Timor took a whole day and had the participation of 21 petitioners of several countries of the world (see document enclosed), and about 6 representatives of Governments (including, as always, Portugal and Indonesia). Last year the meeting had a similar participation in number and for the first time a Portuguese Catholic Bishop made a statement at the Committee. It would be important that this year the session of the Special Committee obtains an impact at least similar, and that the Asian voice is reinforced, corresponding to its strategic importance.

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8. This year the discussion on East Timor will take place some day between 12 and 15 August.

Lisbon, 27 May 1988.